814 author should have used the play to strengthen
538 the prestige of the trade union among the worker-
536 audiences and to emphasize the "heroic" qualities of the leading protagonist, a Communist cadre. The portrayal of the Party cadre P'eng Kang in the play was deemed incorrect, "for the Party's leadership is invariably collective, but in the play, P'eng seems to be quite alone." The play was thus rated "of low educational value." The author of "Old Worker Ku Fu-shan" was reprimanded because he "not only distorts the image of a model Party member but also completely ignores the function of Party training and leadership."

814 The classic example of Communist literary
546 and artistic criticism involves the 1951 Shanghai-produced film, "Wu Hsün Chuan," based on the life of a famous nineteenth century advocate of free education who lived in Shantung Province. Wu Hsün was born into a poor family and was thus deprived of formal education. In order to help children to attend school, he dedicated himself to hard work and frugal living; and by shrewd investment of his savings, he succeeded in accumulating funds for the education of the poor. Wu Hsün's contribution to Chinese education was never questioned until the Communist critics attacked the film. Wu's efforts, according to the Communist critics, only strengthened the feudal order and arrested the forces of progress; rather than serving as an "accomplice" of the Manchu rulingorder, the

814 critics said, Wu should have joined the
514 revolutionary force, i.e., the Taiping revolutionaries. Furthermore, Wu Hsün's means of accumulating wealth was indicative of his "subservience to the rich and of his exploitation of the poor."[6]

The evolution of criticism of the film "Wu Hsün Chuan" is illustrative of the nature of Communist literary and artistic criticism. Adverse opinions toward the film were not initiated by literary and art circles, but by the Central Committee of the Communist Party. In fact, the film was until then very enthusiastically received, even by many eminent Communists. On May 20, 1951, the Peking People's Daily, an organ of the Central Committee of the Party, published an editorial alluding to this state of affairs. "Some comrades say that they have already mastered Marxism, but when confronted with concrete issues, they completely lose their critical sense." The "Party Life" column in the same issue ordered all Communists to join in criticism of "Wu Hsün Chuan." On June 4, a directive of the Ministry of Education of the People's Government, published in the People's Daily, instructed all the educational personnel in the nation to discuss the film.

6. The most representative voice of this kind is Ai Ch'ing's article "Oppose the Slave Ideology of Wu Hsün" in People's Literature, Vol. 2, June 1, 1951, pp. 9-10.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF15 East China
AF15

814 On August 4, a final and definitive verdict on
546 the film was delivered by Chou Yang, the
Vice-minister of Cultural Affairs of the Communist
government. He labeled the film as unrealistic art and a product of anti-historical and anti-popular ideology.[7] Party organs in all parts of China where "Wu Hsün Chuan" had been shown used the film as a target for ideological propaganda. The ideology of the film was also discussed at the third session of the first National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, which met from October 23 to November 1, 1951. Members of the All-China Federation of the Literary and Art Circles began to echo the view of the Central Committee of the Party and confessed that, while they had made definite progress in the past two years, nevertheless they had always fallen behind the development of Chinese society. This confession led the writers to "plunge" into study in an effort to "remold their idology and to sharpen their critical sense."

814 This conflict between critical and creative
538 forces also manifests itself in the bulk of the incongruous writings of the literary critics in Communist China. The critics has ready an abundance of clichés, jargon, and theories of

7. Current Background, Hong Kong, American Consulate General, No. 113, September 1, 1951.

536 If we take into account the fact that theater-going is now an organized activity of the various mass organizations such as the labor unions, the Women's Federation, the New Democratic Youth Corps. the Young Pioneers, and the study circles, the length of the run and the size of the audience do not accurately reflect the enthusiasm of the people but rather the effectiveness of the Communist organization for mass participation in the field of recreation.

Russian plays have been staged in Shanghai with considerable fanfare. However, a most spectacular event was the recent production of a Polish play, translated into Chinese, called The Rosenburgs, depicting "the suffering of innocent people in the capitalist, war-mongering country, i.e., the U.S.A."

546 5. Motion pictures. Shanghai and Mukden are now the centers of China's motion-picture industry. The White-haired Girl, based on the same version as the opera, won the first prize among the thirty-eight entries at the Communist International Motion-Picture Festival in Czechoslovakia in 1951. The Concentration Camp at Shang-yao, which was made in 1951, describes the life of the "patriotic people" in the Kuomintang concentration camp, and, according to the Communist reviewers, successfully demonstrates the "collective heroism" of the Communists under duress. When the rural production drive was about to begin in 1954, the movie Good Harvest was

546 timed to be shown to the peasants during the festivities of the lunar New Year, in order to emphasize the importance of increasing the output of the land. The People on the Grassland is a movie about the Mongols in Inner Mongolia. Sound tracks in the Mongol and Uigur languages have been made so that this picture may be circulated among those ethnic minorities.

G. Shou-shu

536 Popular entertainment in East China, especially in places like Shanghai, Soochow, and Nanking, includes story-telling with or without singing parts and musical accompaniment known as shuo-shu. Stories with singing parts and musical accompaniment are called ta-shu, and those without singing parts are called hsiao-shu. Since they are not meant for staging, adaptable to extemporizations and the singer or narrator is free to add his own interpretation of the story. Most of the singers and narrators obtain their stories and verses from favorite sources like the Shui-hu Chuan (The Water Margins or All Men Are Brothers), The Dream of the Red Chamber, The Romance of the Three Kingdoms, and the West Chamber.

At first, the Communists tried to "educate" and "reform" the singer and narrators so that they could sing or narrate more "worthy" stories. Now that the Communists themselves have learned to appreciate the value of traditional literature, they seek new interpretations of the old fiction.

208 is no longer in existence, but this official policy
536 will be expected of responsible officials at the provincial level.

B. Motion Pictures

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208 1. Control. The Communist consolidation of control of the motion picture industry and its activities followed a pattern of similar design to that of the control of the stage. The seizure of existing facilities and the indoctrination of personnel preceded a planned expansion. Motion picture production in this region is but a part of the nationally centralized undertaking. At this writing, there seems to be no independent film-production company in East China to complicate the problem of control. The regional, or -- after June 1954 -- provincial Cultural and Educational Commission is responsible for executing Peking's orders on control of the movie industry and is subject to supervision by Communist Party propaganda agencies at appropriate levels. To handle administrative details, there are branches of the Motion Picture Association of China in all provinces and major municipalities. The association co-ordinates film production and distribution, again under the supervision of the government control system. Movie actors and workers are organized and are supervised by the Motion Picture Association of China. It would be a fine network of co-ordination for business promotion, if the industry were independent. But as it is in East China, the system amounts to a complicated machine in which every part of the movie industry is hamstrung by overnment orders and none can function individually.

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208 To bar "undesirable" European and American films, censorship has been established on the regional and provincial levels.

2. Development. The Shanghai Motion Picture Producing Company is among the three government concerns established immediately after the founding of the Peking regime in late 1949. The company combines the former first and second Central Motion Picture Production companies of the Kuomintang, the former China Motion Picture Production Company, and the Experimental Movie Factory.[49] Its establishment concentrates all of the major movie-producing facilities in the East China Region. Seven small private companies were still in operation in East China in late 1950. However, the fact that these firms were "helped by the East China People's Government to resume operation"[50] indicates they could no longer have a voice in supervision of production.

The first motion pictures made by the Communist-controlled companies in East China were documentaries and newsreels. No significant film was made in 1949 or in the spring of 1950. By summer of 1950, the first new film with an integral plot was made in this region. Entitled "The Thought Problem," the film deals with the ideological transition from traditional Chinese concepts, and Westernized "bourgeoisie" Chinese attitudes popular among the metropolitan Chinese to the Marxian mode of thinking. It was hailed in East China as a turning point in Chinese motion

49. Tu-pao Shou-ts'e [Newspaper Reading Handbook], Hankow Ch'ang-chiang jih-pao she, 1950, p. 252.

50. Compendium of Gov't Reports, p. 563

546
208 pictures. Since 1951, much progress has been claimed by the Communists, but there are evidences of continuing deficiency. The literary purges that have been going on in East China exert restrictive influence on script-writers. Scarcity of suitable scripts is the constant complaint of those in charge of motion picture production. The theaters are forced to supplement their meager supply with newsreels depicting the progress of China's economic reconstruction and a steady flow of Russian films. A Japanese journalist reported upon his return from a visit to Red China in 1953 that the average theater in a large Chinese city needed about eight films a month, that the government could only supply one or two; the rest were Russian films.[51]

To handle distribution, the East China Region had as early as 1949 a branch of the national China Motion Picture Distribution Company, another government-directed agency. The company itself also functions as a clearing-house and a censor while doling out the films on a planned quota. Apparently no theater is permitted to have direct dealings with any producer, domestic or foreign. In 1950, the distribution company was already serving about one hundred theaters in Shanghai, Nanking, and the provinces of Kiangsu, Chekiang, and Anhwei. So far there has been no report on any large-scale construction

51. Chao Ts'ung, "I-nien-lai Chung'kung Ti Wen-hua Kung-tso" ["The Chinese Communist Cultural Work during the Past Year"], China Weekly, Jan. 4, 1954, p. 36.

546
208 of theaters in this region. However, a program for building "cultural palaces" with facilities for showing films is under way. Eventually the government aims at having one such "palace" in every city, large village, and industrial and mining center. Meanwhile mobile motion picture projection teams keep their regular routes to serve the countryside. Early in 1950, a total of over one hundred such mobile teams were traveling throughout Mainland China. In East China, Chairman Shu T'ung of the Cultural and Educational Commission for this region said in July 1950 that more personnel were being trained to expand the mobile teams. By October 1951 there were 60 mobile projection teams serving this region.[52]

3. Recent Trends. For movie production in East China, the recent trend is either to translate or copy "progressive films" of foreign vintage. The Shanghai Motion Picture Producing Company planned to copy, in collaboration with the Northeast Motion Picture Producing Company, over forty foreign films in 1954. Most of these films were Russian. A few East German, Czechoslovakian, North Korean, Japanese, and Italian products were also included. "Bicycle Thief" was among the Italian movies slated for translation.[53] For one thing, translation and copying of foreign films already approved by Communist theoreticians must be a relief to the purge-haunted East China script-writers. Moreover,

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52. Liberation Daily, Oct. 1, 1951, p. 10.

53. Enlightenment Daily, Peking, April 6, 1954, p. 2.

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208 the Chinese movie-goers, especially those in such metropolises as Shanghai and Nanking, are accustomed to foreign films, especially American products. Russian films are equally attractive. In Shanghai, often more than a dozen theaters show the same film simultaneously.[54] Anti-Communist writers tend to attribute this fact to the short supply of films, and the popularity of theaters to the boredom of life in a Communist state. Chinese films such as "Liang Shan-po yü Chu Ying-t'ai" and the "White-Haired Girl" have extensive showings in East China. American films were not immediately banned in East China, but Communist authorities in 1950 discouraged people from patronizing theaters showing American films. In April 1950 American films in Shanghai were drawing some 570,000 patrons a month.[55] This figure represented a drop in attendance of approximately 50 per cent as compared with the record in pre-Communist days. Attendance continued to decline until today no American film is advertised in the newspapers of this region.

C. Lantern Slides

In April 1950, the Peking government established an agency in charge of the manufacture

54. Liberation Daily, June 27, 1952, p.3.

55. Compendium of Government Reports, p. 563.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF15 East China
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546
208 of lantern slides and projectors. At the government-operated Nanking Scientific Apparatus Factory, production of slides and projectors was also assigned top priority. By 1952, there were 31 units in China producing such equipment to supply "cultural centers" and libraries. Among the slides produced, the most popular series bore such titles as "100 Years of American Aggression in China," "The Angry Fire of the Resist-America-Aid-Korea Movement," and "Oppose the Re-arming of Japan by American Imperialism." Almost 200,000,000 people were said to have seen these and other slides[56] in 1951. In East China by the end of September 1951, there was at least one projector in use in each hsien.[57] According to Wang Yu', deputh director of the Social Cultural Affairs Department for East China, these projectors were to be used to inform the public on current affairs, government policies, and the popular sciences. Mobile motion picture teams and propaganda units frequently make use of slides to aid their operation. Slides are prized because they can be easily adapted to local conditions. Each propaganda unit may suggest ideas to the manufacturers, who tailor the materials to suit specific needs.

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56. People's Handbook, 1952, p. 444.
57. Liberation Daily, Shanghai, October 1, 1951, p. 10.